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EPIDEMIC NOTES.

[Translated in this Bureau from the Veröffentlichungen des Kaiserlichen Gesundheitsamtes, Berlin, September 6, 1899.]

PLAGUE.

RUSSIA.—According to official advices for the week ended August 29, an epidemic of acute pneumonia broke out during the second half of the month of July at the village of Kolobovka, in the district of Tzarev, government of Astrakhan. Up to August 29, 23 deaths had been reported. No new cases were reported during the week ended August 29. At that date 3 cases were under treatment. The disease had not been carried to other localities.

PORTUGAL.—According to advices of August 29 the Spanish Government sent representatives to study the epidemic of plague reported to have broken out at Oporto, and on their return both physicians gave it as their opinion that the plague epidemic would remain restricted within the limits of the city of Oporto if the military cordon around that city were maintained. Recent official advices state that from the date of the outbreak to August 29, 1 or 2 new cases were reported daily.

EGYPT.—During the week ended August 25, 3 cases, 1 each on the 20th, 22d, and 25th, respectively, with 2 deaths, were reported at Alexandria.

BRITISH EAST INDIES.—During the week ended July 29 the number of plague deaths in the city of Bombay fell to 58 as against 62 in the preceding week. In the presidency the number was 2,437, as against 1,869 in the preceding week. Of this number, 868 deaths occurred in the city of Poona. In the State of Mysore and in the Belgaum district the epidemic increased; in several districts of the State of Hyderabad it has again broken out. From Karachi 4, and from Calcutta 5 plague deaths were reported.

During the week ended August 5, the epidemic considerably increased. City of Bombay, 84; preceding week, 58. Presidency of Bombay, 3,380; preceding week, 2,437. City of Poona, 1,103; preceding week, 868. Seven districts and as many States show a considerable increase. In Calcutta, the epidemic decidedly gained ground, the deaths being 56, as against 5 in the preceding week. Five deaths were reported in the suburb of Howrah. In the State of Mysore there were 120 plague deaths; preceding week, 63. In the State of Hyderabad, on the contrary, the epidemic declined.

CHOLERA.

BRITISH INDIA—*Calcutta*.—During the week ended August 25, 80 cholera deaths were reported.

INSTRUCTIONS IN TROPICAL MEDICINE.

[Translated in this Bureau from *Le Progrès Medical*. July 15, 1899.]

The medical press has already repeatedly pointed out the important innovations which have been made in Great Britain in regard to instruction in tropical medicine. That country, whose colonial empire is the greatest in the world, could not fail to appreciate the fact that it is not sufficient to study the native diseases. In these days when colonial enterprises, distant expeditions, and commercial transactions become every day more and more extensive, it is necessary to give to the study of exotic diseases all the importance they deserve by instituting a new line of instruction in the universities already existing, or by creating special schools of instruction.

London School of Tropical Medicine.

Under the enlightened influence of Dr. Patrick Manson, the celebrated English pathologist, a new school has been established in London, entitled London School of Tropical Medicine. It is under the special patronage of Mr. Joseph Chamberlain, secretary of state for the colonies, who is at the head of a committee formed by the Seamen's Hospital Society.

Location of the school.

The school is established in the Branch Hospital, Victoria and Albert Docks, 20 minutes distance from the center of London. It occupies a new building, comprising lecture halls, laboratories, museums, etc. The neighboring hospital contains 50 beds. The floating naval hospital, the Dreadnaught, is anchored in the Thames, at Greenwich. It contains 25 beds, making a total of 275, and was placed at the service of the sick returning from the colonies. In addition, two free dispensaries are open to the sick in the East India Dock Road, at London and at Gravesend. The institution and its hospital facilities leave nothing to be desired.

Organization of the course.

The course of study is so arranged as to keep the students at the school as short a time as possible. The students are recruited among physicians already in practice and whose leisure is restricted, or among students of the fifth year. There are three yearly sessions, each of which lasts only three months, *i. e.*, from October 1 to December 31; from January 15 to April 14, and from May 1 to July 31. The fee is 38 francs for one week, 290 francs for a course of eight weeks, and 508 francs 75 centimes for the complete course of three months. A certificate of studies is given to those who have followed the complete course, and have successfully passed the final examination.

System of instruction.

The system of instruction includes in all their aspects the numerous questions relating to pathology and tropical hygiene. The practical exercises are varied in such a manner as to familiarize the students with the methods of examination in the fresh state, with preparations treated by various reagents, and with the fixation and conservation not only of the blood, urine, and other dejecta but of the different tissues and organs. As regards the blood, for example, they are taught to determine the colorimetric power, the number of globules, the specific weight and coagulability. These subjects mastered, the study of hæmatozoia follows, and here naturally paludism occupies the first place.

Programme of the course of study of paludism.

The course of study of the parasite of paludism is conducted on the most practical lines. Realizing that most questions relating to the study of human parasitology have no general interest if limited to the knowledge of the parasites peculiar to man and to the morbid conditions caused by them, the author of the programme reserves a special study of the analogous parasitic forms observed in animals. Thus he successively passes in review the halteridium of birds, the trypanosomes of frogs, the pyroplasma bigeminum, which in cattle causes Texas fever, and the singular trypanosome with which the tsetse fly inoculates animals like the ox and the goat, and which has followed the European from equatorial Africa. Such a system of instruction can not be too highly praised.

The special diseases studied.

A number of diseases which are apparently infectious or contagious but whose pathogenic agent remains unknown are studied, such as beriberi, sunstroke, tropical endemic neuritis, gangrenous rectitis, yaws, goundum, ainhum, etc. Our present ignorance of the cause of these morbid conditions is an additional reason for directing to them the attention of physicians who expect to live in the tropics and whose investigations may throw light on the obscure nature of these diseases.

The students also receive complete instruction in all that concerns the conditions of life in warm climates from the points of view of acclimatization, general knowledge of the water, the soil, the food, and the hygiene of cities and plantations, etc.

Inauguration of the school.

The new school was projected last year, and inaugurated about two months ago. On Wednesday, May 10, the inauguration banquet was held, being presided over by Mr. Chamberlain. On this occasion an appeal was made to the generosity of those persons interested in colonial questions in order to collect the funds necessary to run the school. A sum of 395,000 francs (£17,170) was collected, and Sir Henry Burdet pledged himself to contribute for three consecutive years the sum of 7,500 francs (£326) for a travel purse for the most meritorious student. I may here add in parenthesis that the Belgian Government promises an annual subscription for the purpose of educating sanitary officers for the Congo.

The London school will be opened to the first class of students on Monday, October 2, next. During the next two months the school will, no doubt, continue to receive subscriptions, as the English give liberally to educational establishments.

Schools to be inaugurated in other cities.

Other cities have followed the example of London and founded similar institutions. In a letter dated November 9, 1898, Mr. Chamberlain pointed out the exceptional facilities for the study of tropical diseases offered by the medical school of Liverpool in view of the commercial relations of this city with the countries of western Africa and other tropical regions. This suggested to Mr. Alfred Jones, a prominent citizen of Liverpool, to contribute an annual sum of £350, represented by a capital of £10,000, to aid in the establishment of an international school of tropical diseases. Acting on this proposition, a committee of 14 members, comprising shipowners, merchants, representatives of the Royal Southern Hospital and of University College, was appointed to carry out the generous intentions of the donor. The committee lost no time, and the Liverpool School of Tropical Diseases and Animal Parasitology is already in full operation.

Constitution of the Liverpool School.

The Liverpool School is associated with University College and the Royal Southern Hospital. It receives diploma physicians from all countries, and students of the fifth year. The course of studies resembles that of the London School, but it lays more stress on the study of parasitology properly so-called. A special course of instruction is provided for missionaries, planters, travelers, and nurses. The courses last two months and are divided into three series: October–December, January–March, April–June. Private researches are also permitted at the school. The clinics of the Royal Southern Hospital are open to the students. This hospital received, daily, patients returning from tropical countries, and it undoubtedly contains the best assemblage of exotic diseases to be found in Europe. A vast laboratory is attached to the hospital, which is also provided with the complete modern outfit of appliances and is ready for every sort of examination. The Thompson-Yates laboratories of pathology and physiology are placed at the service of the students, as are also the bacteriological, chemical, and photographic laboratories and the museum of pathology. The foundations for the buildings for the new school are already laid.

Educational expeditions.

In order to perfect the students in the knowledge of tropical diseases, expeditions will be organized to the English Colonies in West Africa. The first of these expeditions will leave Europe in August under direction of Dr. Ross. It will reach Sierra Leone at the height of the fever season, and will visit successively the most unhealthy points on the west coast for the purpose of studying paludal and tropical fevers. The success of the Liverpool School is assured by its having Maj. Ronald Ross as professor of tropical diseases. Major Ross was formerly physician in the army of India, and has recently made himself famous by his discovery of the transformations which the hæmatozoaria of paludism undergoes in the stomach of a mosquito. Pathology is taught by M. R. Boyce, zoology by M. W. A. Herchnan, hygiene by M. E. W. Hope, tropical pathology by M. E. Annet. The school comprises five chairs, beside the numerous personnel of the Royal Southern Hospital who take an active part in the instruction.

Universities of Aberdeen and Edinburgh.

The University of Aberdeen has created a similar course of instruction under the management of Dr. Macanachie, formerly principal of the Medical College of Bombay. The course commenced last May. The University of Edinburgh has followed this

example. At the present moment it is organizing a course on tropical diseases which shall consist of 25 lessons, with practical demonstrations and exercises, to be given twice a year. The current of ideas has naturally led to the creation of a periodical exclusively devoted to exotic pathology. Messrs. J. Cantlie and W. J. Simpson have been publishing for a year past, under the title of *Journal of Tropical Medicine*, a monthly publication, the rapid success of which is explained by the great interest taken in this branch of study.

Government support.

The English Government has followed the initiative of the universities. The Minister for the Colonies, in cooperation with the Royal Society, has instituted a committee for the study of paludism. Dr. C. W. Daniels, whose long sojourn in British Guiana, and his own admirable studies in parasitology, naturally suggested for the position, has been placed at the head of the committee. The committee will repair successively to Professor Golgi, at Pavia; to Professor Calli, at Rome; then to Africa, in order to determine the different clinical forms of paludism, and their possible relations with the hæmatozoaria of different diseases.

The English physicians will, no doubt, in the near future make very important contributions to the study of tropical diseases in general, and more particularly of the parasitic diseases which prevail in the warm regions of the globe.

Action of continental countries.

The Government of Belgium has created in the university of Liege a chair for the study of the diseases of warm climates, to which Professor Firket has been called.

Germany has already sent Professor Koch to Egypt and the Indies to study cholera, to South Africa to study bovine plague, and recently to Italy to study paludism. The physicians at the young German colonies, among whom may be cited Plehn, Scheuhe, and Ziemann, have already made important reports on diseases of the tropics. Now that the German Empire has acquired the Caroline and Mariana islands, its interest in tropical diseases will no doubt be greatly increased, and we may hope to see the establishment of a school similar to the schools of London and Liverpool at the universities of Berlin and Leipsic, and at Kiel, which is at the same time a great port and a university center.

In Italy Pasquale has profited much by his stay in Erythrea, and Rho has written a remarkable book on the diseases of warm countries. At Rome, last year, a society was formed for the study of paludism, the first annual report of which, signed by Professor Celli, was published in December, 1898. The United States has participated in the movement. A course of instruction in tropical medicine specially directed to the study of the diseases of Cuba, Porto Rico, and the Philippines is projected at Johns Hopkins University.

In France the marine sanitary service rivals the sanitary service of the colonies in the struggle to elucidate the obscure questions which confront the physician in tropical countries. The Archives of Naval Medicine, now in the thirty-sixth year of its existence, testifies to the work accomplished by the fleet surgeons. The *Annals of Hygiene and Colonial Medicine*, founded last year, promises a harvest of discovery. Our maritime and colonial physicians show themselves worthy pupils of the specialists who have trained them in exotic pathology. This particular branch of medical science is represented in the schools of applied medicine at Brest, Rochefort, and Toulon. At Bordeaux a course of exotic pathology is given at the college. By decree of July 12, 1898, a chair for the study of the diseases of warm climates was founded at the Medical School of Paris.

It may be observed here that the French medical colleges in general, and at Paris in particular, have for some years past given a course of instruction in parasitology. The city of Marseilles has created five chairs of tropical medicine in its medical school. These chairs are denominated as follows: 1, Exotic clinic; 2, exotic bacteriology and pathology; 3, colonial climatology, hygiene, and epidemiology; 4, colonial natural history; 5, medical matter and colonial alimentation.

This programme is incontestably more complete than that adopted at London.

It appears that all the French schools of medicine have realized the extreme importance of this branch of medicine. Especially is this true of those schools which by their geographic position stand in direct relation with warm countries, and in which, consequently, the instruction is most likely to pass from theory to practice.

An attempt in this direction has been made by the school of Algiers. After long effort Dr. Brault has succeeded in obtaining the use of a barrack containing some beds designed to receive persons attacked with filariasis, bilharzia, mycetoma, grave forms of paludism, and many other parasitic diseases. Dr. Brault has already obtained brilliant results and published very remarkable reports.